



SITTINGBOURNE AND MILTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

FOR

1952

Medical Officer of Health

FRANK HAUXWELL, M.B., Ch.B. (Glas.), D.P.H. (Cantab.)



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Miss M. Scarr (until 21st June, 1952)

Miss S. Whitehead (from 21st July, 1952)

SITTINGBOURNE AND MILTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

HEALTH OFFICES,
JOHNSON HOUSE,
BURLEY ROAD,
SITTINGBOURNE, KENT.

August, 1953

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit herewith the Annual Report on the health of Sittingbourne for the year 1952.

According to the Registrar General's estimate the mid-year population was 21,940, which is an increase of only 36 over the Census figure taken in 1951. As the natural increase in population, i.e., the excess of births over deaths, during 1951 was 82 and 102 in 1952, this suggests that some migration from the town is taking place.

The Birth Rate for the year was 15.7 per thousand of the population as compared with 15.8 in 1951. The corrected Birth Rate at 15.8 is still, however, slightly higher than that for England and Wales as a whole, i.e., 15.3 per thousand.

The Death Rate at 11.1 per thousand shows a decrease as compared with the rate of 12.0 per thousand in 1951. In regard to the causes of death there is little appreciable difference in comparison with previous years. The corrected Death Rate of 10.2 per thousand compares very favourably with the rate for England and Wales as a whole, i.e., 11.3 per thousand.

There was a welcome reduction in the number of infant deaths during the year. The number dying under the age of one year being 9 in 1952 as compared with 14 in 1951. The Infant Mortality Rate for the year was 26 per thousand live births as against 40.3 per thousand in the previous year. The rate for England and Wales as a whole was 27.6 per thousand. As mentioned in the report, however, there is still work to be done in the saving of infants who die under the age of one week, these still forming more than half the infant deaths that occur. A summary of the main statistical figures since 1930 is given in Table III.

In regard to infectious disease, 1952 was a comparatively healthy year though there was a slightly greater incidence of Measles and Scarlet Fever compared with the previous year. Only 5 cases of Poliomyelitis occurred during the year. For the fifth year in succession there were no cases of Diphtheria, but the per-

centage of children immunised against this disease is still too low if the present freedom from it is to be preserved.

Although there was a slight increase in the number of new cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified during 1952 (17 as compared with 15 in 1951) the number of deaths, 3, was the same as in the previous year.

In that portion of the report relating to the general sanitary condition of the area, supervision of food supplies and housing, I am indebted to Mr. Leslie, Chief Sanitary Inspector.

A special report (printed as Appendix "E") was submitted to the Council in October, 1952, on the subject of Housing and Slum Clearance. This suggested the gradual clearance of approximately 300 of the worst properties in the town which ought to be demolished. It was suggested that these be dealt with in 2 yearly periods over a period of 8 years commencing with 55 houses during the first period of 1953/54 and gradually stepping up the numbers dealt with to the last period 1959/60, during which it was hoped 100 would be dealt with. Although the Council did not accept the whole of the proposed 8 year programme, authority was given for the implementation of the first 2 year programme involving the demolition of 55 houses and during the current year the necessary steps are being taken for dealing with these.

The maintenance of food hygiene ranks as a high priority in the work of the Sanitary Department, and it is very satisfactory to note that generally speaking food shops and food preparing premises reached a high standard of cleanliness. No alterations have, however, yet been made in connection with improving the accommodation and the conditions at the Slaughterhouse, and although 100% inspection of all animals presented for slaughter was maintained throughout the year, the conditions under which such inspections are carried out are still very difficult. That such inspection was very necessary is evident from the fact that it was found necessary to condemn 24,591 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. of meat and offal during the year.

In carrying on the work of the Department I am greatly indebted to all members of the staff for their ever cheerful and helpful assistance, and especially am I indebted to Mr. Leslie, Chief Sanitary Inspector, who despite his manifold duties can always find time to help in solving problems.

I would also take this opportunity of thanking members of the Council for their encouragement and kindly consideration.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

FRANK HAUXWELL,

Medical Officer of Health.

Section I

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

1. CLIMATOLOGY

After a fairly dry Spring and early Summer, the Autumn was wet and cold and Winter set in early. The total rainfall for the year was only 27.26 inches in comparison with 37.19 inches during 1951.

Monthly rainfall readings recorded at Highsted Waterworks over the past five years are shown in Appendix "A."

2. AREA IN ACRES

Land and Inland water	...	...	4,935
No change.			

3. POPULATION

The estimated mid-year population for 1952, as given by the Registrar General, was 21,940, an increase of 20 over the estimated mid-year population for 1951, and an increase of 36 over the Census figures taken in April, 1951.

As the natural increase in population (i.e., the excess of births over deaths) during 1951 was 82 and 102 in 1952, it would appear that some not inconsiderable migration from the town is taking place.

4. NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES

The number of inhabited houses at the end of 1952 was 6,655, an increase of 77 on the preceding year.

5. RATEABLE VALUE

The rateable value has risen to £171,440 as compared with £167,727 in 1951.

6. SUM REPRESENTING PENNY RATE

The sum representing the penny rate is £686 as compared with £690 in 1951.

Section II

VITAL STATISTICS

1. BIRTHS

Despite the general national fall in the birth rate, the number of births in Sittingbourne during 1952 (346) compares favourably with those of the immediate preceding years, i.e., 1951 (347) and 1950 (343). These figures are, however, much below the immediate post-war years, i.e., 1946 (450) and 1947 (532).

(a) Live Births

		Males	Females	Totals
Legitimate	...	160 (183)	171 (149)	331 (332)*
Illegitimate	...	8 (8)	7 (7)	15 (15)
Totals	...	168 (191)	178 (156)	346 (347)

The percentage of illegitimate births has remained constant at 4.5% each year for the past 3 years. For the preceding 3 years, 1949, 1948 and 1947, the rate was respectively, 5.3%, 3.1% and 4.5%.

(b) Birth Rate

The crude birth rate per 1,000 of the population was 15.7 in 1952 as against 15.8 in 1951. The figures for previous years were : 15.3 in 1950, 16.8 in 1949, 17.8 in 1948 and 24.4 in 1947.

The corrected birth rate is 15.8, as compared with that of England and Wales as a whole, i.e., 15.3 per thousand.

(c) Still-Births

Three still-births occurred during the year, as compared with eight during 1951 and seven for each of the years 1950, 1949 and 1948. There were fifteen still-births in 1947.

The percentage of still-births to live-births for the year shows a considerable drop over the past 5 years, being 0.8% as against 2.3% in 1951, 2.0% in 1950, 1.8% in 1949, 1.7% in 1948 and 2.8% in 1947. None of the still-births during the year was illegitimate.

Footnote :—* Figures in brackets relate to the preceding year

2. DEATHS

(a) The number of deaths during the year was 244 as against 265 in 1951, 228 in 1950, 271 in 1949, 228 in 1948 and 248 in 1947. Of these, 131 were male and 113 females. The corresponding figures for previous years were 147 - 118 in 1951, 120 - 108 in 1950, 152 - 119 in 1949, 135 - 93 in 1948 and 127 - 121 in 1947.

The average age of death was 67.0 being 66.9 for males and 67.1 for females. The oldest death was that of a female aged 94 years. The average age of death during 1951 was 65.9 being 63.9 for males and 68.5 for females.

The following table shows the age groups in which the deaths occurred :—

TABLE I

Sex	Under 1 Year	1- 5-	5- 15-	15- 25-	25- 35-	35- 45-	45- 55-	55- 65-	65- 75-	75- 85 and Over	T't'l
Males	3	1	1	—	2	3	7	25	39	40	131
Females	6	—	—	1	—	7	7	13	32	30	113
Total	9	1	1	1	2	10	14	38	71	70	244

(b) Death Rate

The crude death rate per thousand of the estimated population was 11.1 as compared with 12.0 in 1951, 10.2 in 1950, 12.2 in 1949, 10.2 in 1948 and 11.5 in 1947.

The corrected death rate is 10.2 which compares very favourably with the rate for England and Wales as a whole, i.e., 11.3 per thousand.

(c) The causes of death classified by the Registrar General under the 36 headings based on the Abbreviated List of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death, 1948, are set out in Table II overleaf.

TABLE II

Disease	Males	Females	Totals
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory ...	3 (1)*	— (2)*	3 (3)*
2. Tuberculosis, other ...	1 (—)	— (—)	1 (—)
3. Syphilitic disease ...	2 (2)	— (—)	2 (2)
4. Diphtheria ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
5. Whooping Cough ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
6. Meningococcal infections ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
7. Acute Poliomyelitis ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
8. Measles ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases ...	— (1)	— (—)	— (1)
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	5 (5)	5 (6)	10 (11)
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung bronchus ...	2 (5)	— (1)	2 (6)
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	— (—)	4 (3)	4 (3)
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	— (—)	2 (2)	2 (2)
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ...	11 (7)	14 (6)	25 (13)
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia ...	— (1)	— (—)	— (1)
16. Diabetes ...	— (3)	— (—)	— (3)
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	14 (10)	22 (22)	36 (32)
18. Coronary disease, angina ...	17 (23)	12 (11)	29 (34)
19. Hypertension with heart disease ...	3 (4)	1 (1)	4 (5)
20. Other heart diseases ...	32 (38)	28 (40)	60 (78)
21. Other circulatory disease ...	3 (2)	1 (3)	4 (5)
22. Influenza ...	— (5)	1 (1)	1 (6)
23. Pneumonia ...	4 (6)	4 (2)	8 (8)
24. Bronchitis ...	9 (10)	2 (3)	11 (13)
25. Other diseases of respiratory system ...	1 (—)	1 (—)	2 (—)
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ...	1 (4)	— (—)	1 (4)
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ...	1 (1)	— (—)	1 (1)
28. Nephritis and nephrosis ...	3 (1)	3 (1)	6 (2)
29. Hyperplasia and prostate ...	2 (2)	— (—)	2 (2)
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
31. Congenital malformations ...	— (1)	2 (1)	2 (2)
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases ...	10 (7)	9 (12)	19 (19)
33. Motor vehicle accidents ...	2 (3)	— (—)	2 (3)
34. All other accidents ...	2 (3)	1 (1)	3 (4)
35. Suicide ...	3 (2)	1 (—)	4 (2)
36. Homicide and operations of war ...	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
Totals ...	131 (147)	113 (118)	244 (265)

In regard to the causes of death there is little appreciable difference in comparison with previous years. As is to be

Footnote :—* Figures in brackets relate to the preceding year

expected in a population containing an increasing proportion of older people, deaths from heart disease and diseases associated therewith still account for the largest proportion of deaths.

There was a slight decrease during 1952 in deaths attributable to respiratory diseases despite the cold and wet Autumn and Winter.

Deaths attributable to malignant diseases still, however, show an ever increasing rate. Whether this is due to an actual greater incidence of these diseases it is difficult to state owing to relatively small numbers available, but it is quite possible that this increase is due more to more accurate diagnosis resulting from increased facilities available.

It is pleasing to note that there have been no maternal deaths since 1950.

(d) The following Table gives details of Deaths, Births and Infantile Mortality for the period 1930 to 1952, inclusive.

TABLE III

Year	Deaths			Births				Infant Mortality				
	Population	Number of deaths at all ages.	Crude Death Rate per 1,000 of the population.	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.	Total.	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the Population.	Still-Births.	Legitimate	Illegitimate	Total	Deaths of Infants under 1 Year of Age per 1,000 Births.
1930	19,838	257	12.8	332	20	352	17.6	7	14	1	15	42.6
1931	20,175	226	11.2	339	6	345	17.1	7	10	1	11	31.8
1932	20,320	222	10.9	342	13	355	17.4	12	22	1	23	64.7
1933	20,350	256	12.5	337	13	350	17.1	14	22	—	22	62
1934	20,480	265	12.9	321	8	329	16.0	10	16	2	18	54
1935	20,700	237	11.4	340	8	348	16.4	15	11	—	11	32
1936	20,920	245	11.7	296	11	307	14.6	15	12	—	12	39
1937	20,880	244	11.6	322	13	335	16.0	1	11	—	11	32
1938	20,950	218	10.4	293	10	303	14.4	14	9	1	10	33
1939	20,860	262	12.4	318	10	328	15.7	15	8	1	9	27
1940	20,670	280	13.5	311	9	320	15.4	10	18	1	19	57
1941	19,880	247	12.4	257	11	268	13.4	7	6	—	6	22
1942	19,270	233	12.0	291	18	309	16.0	9	16	—	16	51
1943	18,790	249	13.2	334	14	348	18.5	13	17	—	17	48.8
1944	18,790	231	12.2	340	31	371	19.7	9	16	4	20	53.9
1945	19,140	236	12.3	350	34	384	20.0	11	12	3	15	39
1946	21,040	230	10.9	419	31	450	21.3	12	13	1	14	31
1947	21,560	248	11.5	509	23	532	24.4	15	17	—	17	32
1948	22,240	228	10.2	385	12	397	17.8	7	8	—	8	22
1949	22,150	271	12.2	355	19	374	16.8	7	15	—	15	37.4
1950	22,340	228	10.2	328	15	343	15.3	7	8	—	8	23
1951	21,920	265	12.0	332	15	347	15.8	8	14	—	14	40.3
1952	21,940	244	11.1	331	15	346	15.7	3	9	—	9	26.0

As mentioned previously, the above Table is interesting as showing the effect of the war years in producing consistently high

death rates and rates of infant mortality, and of the immediate post-war years in resulting high birth rates.

In more recent years there appears to be a trend towards pre-war standards and it should now be our aim to improve on these.

3. INFANT MORTALITY

(a) The number of deaths of infants under one year of age, during 1952, was 9 as compared with 14 deaths in 1951 and 8 deaths in 1950. The infant mortality rate for the year was 26.0 per thousand live births as against 40.3 per thousand in 1951 and 23 per thousand in 1950. The rate for 1952 compares very favourably with the infant mortality rate for England and Wales as a whole for the same period, i.e., 27.6 per thousand live births.

(b) The detailed causes of death among infants during 1952 were as follows :—

TABLE IV

Cause	Sex	Age at Death	Place of Birth	Place of Death
Broncho-Pneumonia ...	M	3 months	Hospital	Hospital
Congenital Heart Disease ...	F	12 hours	Hospital	Hospital
Prematurity ...	F	2 days	Hospital	Hospital
Pneumonia ...	F	4 months	Hospital	Hospital
Asphyxia Neonatorum ...	F	2 hours	Home	Home
Intracranial Haemorrhage .	F	1 day	Home	Home
Atelectasis—Prematurity ...	F	2 days	Home	Home
Otitis Media and Mastoiditis	M	7 months	Home	Home
Acute Gastro-Enteritis ...	M	6 months	Home	Home

It will be noted from the above table that the proportion of deaths of infants aged 1 week or less is still fairly high, i.e., there were five deaths under the age of 1 week out of a total of nine deaths under the age of 1 year.

This is still a most serious problem in the saving of infant lives and stresses the great importance of good ante-natal care and all necessary attention at birth.

None of the infant deaths which occurred was of illegitimate birth.

Section III

INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

THEIR PREVALENCE AND CONTROL

1. NOTIFIABLE DISEASES—INCIDENCE

There were fewer cases of infectious disease in 1952 than in the previous two years. This was mainly due to the reduction in the number of cases of Whooping Cough, a disease which had been fairly prevalent during 1951. Only thirty-two cases were reported during 1952, most of these occurring during the last two quarters of the year. Measles showed an increase over the figures for 1951. After comparative freedom during the first two quarters of the year, there was a very heavy incidence during the last two quarters, an incidence which was carried forward into the first quarter of 1953. There were no deaths attributable to this disease and so far as is known the type was reasonably mild. There were no admissions to hospital. Five cases of Acute Poliomyelitis occurred during the third quarter of the year (3 in August and 2 in September) and all were of the paralytic type, two necessitating the use of an iron lung. In one of these cases the patient is a girl aged twelve years who is still in the lung nine months after the onset of the disease. The ages of the patients were—one year, nineteen months, six years, seven-and-a-half years and twelve years. They occurred in widely separated parts of the town and there did not appear to be any connection between them. Three of these were school children. There was a slight increase of Scarlet Fever in 1952 as compared with the previous year, but taken over a period the number reported was not above the average.

(a) The total number of cases occurring, number of cases admitted to hospital and the total deaths from each disease as shown in the Registrar General's classification of deaths, are shown in the following table :—

TABLE V

Disease	No. of Cases	Admissions to Hospital or Sanatorium	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	29 (18)	24 (18)	— (—)*
Diphtheria	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
Measles	297 (226)	— (—)	— (—)
Whooping Cough	32 (219)	— (—)	— (—)
Food Poisoning	— (1)	— (—)	— (—)
Erysipelas	2 (5)	2 (5)	— (—)
Pneumonia	4 (1)	— (—)	8 (8)
Puerperal Pyrexia	— (3)	— (1)	— (—)
Acute Poliomyelitis	5 (5)	5 (5)	— (—)
Tuberculosis—Pulmonary	17 (15)	14 (7)	3 (3)
Non-Pulmonary	1 (2)	— (—)	1 (—)
TOTALS	387 (495)	45 (36)	12 (11)

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

(b) The distribution by age group of the cases notified is shown in Table VI, thus :—

TABLE VI
Age Groups of Cases Notified

	Under 1 Year	1 - 3	3 - 5	5 - 10	10 - 15	15 - 25	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 60	60 and over	Total
Scarlet Fever	1	5	5	15	3	—	—	—	—	—	29
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	12	54	72	156	2	—	1	—	—	—	297
Whooping Cough	1	5	9	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	32
Food Poisoning	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Pneumonia	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	4
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	2	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	5
Tuberculosis :—											
Pulmonary	—	—	—	—	—	13	2	—	—	2	17
Non-Pulmonary	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
TOTALS	14	66	87	189	7	14	4	—	3	3	387

(c) Table VII shows the number of cases of the infectious diseases each year during the past 10 years.

TABLE VII
INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING THE UNDERMENTIONED TEN YEARS

Disease	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	168	46	47	49	24	18	49	37	18	29
Diphtheria	2	1	2	4	1	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	476	10	364	114	75	438	222	544	226	297
Whooping Cough	6	119	53	36	33	188	63	86	219	32
Food Poisoning	—	—	—	—	28	15	2	3	1	—
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	4	—	1	—	—	—
Erysipelas	6	8	4	4	4	3	7	8	5	2
Pneumonia	14	6	3	4	1	3	6	1	1	4
Typhus Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever } Puerperal Pyrexia }	3	3	5	2	2	1	—	1	3	—
Ophthalmia										
Neonatorum	2	3	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—	—	—	4	—	—	2	5	5
Encephalitis										
Lethargica	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro										
Spinal Fever	8	1	3	6	2	1	—	—	—	—
Malaria	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—

The preceding table is interesting as showing the gradual disappearance of two diseases which have come under better control during recent years, i.e., Diphtheria, by immunisation, and Ophthalmia Neonatorum which used to cause so many blind babies, by better technique at the confinement, and the very considerable decrease in Venereal Disease amongst expectant mothers. It is also interesting to note the gradual decrease in the number of cases of food poisoning. There is no doubt that the campaign of recent years for a more hygienic production and distribution of food has given good results, though it must be remembered that a small outbreak from a single source might quite well spoil the present low record of cases.

2. TUBERCULOSIS

Seventeen new cases of Pulmonary and one case of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during the year, as compared with fifteen and two respectively in 1951, and eighteen and six respectively in 1950.

Table VIII shows the number of Tuberculosis cases notified and number of deaths each year since 1930, and Table IX gives a summary of cases on the Tuberculosis Register during 1952.

TABLE VIII

Year	Number of Primary Notifications received		Deaths		Death Rate per 10,000 of Population	
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
1930	30	3	24	3	12.1	1.5
1931	19	8	11	2	5.4	0.9
1932	20	3	11	2	5.3	0.9
1933	24	1	17	1	8.3	0.4
1934	15	3	17	1	8.3	0.4
1935	12	7	9	2	4.3	0.9
1936	12	5	10	1	4.8	0.4
1937	12	9	13	—	6.2	—
1938	12	4	8	2	3.8	0.9
1939	13	4	13	2	6.2	0.9
1940	11	1	11	1	5.3	0.4
1941	9	3	7	1	3.5	0.5
1942	15	4	8	—	4.0	—
1943	9	4	8	3	4.2	1.5
1944	14	3	7	1	3.7	0.5
1945	22	2	7	1	3.0	0.5
1946	14	2	9	1	4.0	0.4
1947	19	5	6	2	2.8	0.9
1948	19	6	8	1	3.5	0.4
1949	20	3	10	2	4.5	0.9
1950	18	6	1	1	0.4	0.4
1951	15	2	3	—	1.3	—
1952	17	1	3	1	1.3	0.4

The most noticeable feature in the preceding table is the gradual disappearance of non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis due no doubt to the better supervision of milk supply. In regard to Pulmonary Tuber-

culosis we are still getting more notifications than in the immediate pre-war years, but there has been a very considerable reduction in the death rate due to this form of disease. In other words though the incidence as judged by the number of notifications received does not appear to have fallen appreciably, the fatality has certainly fallen. In this connection it must be remembered that with increased facilities for early diagnosis and the greater hope of recovery which now exists due to improved methods of treatment, there is not the same reluctance amongst patients to come forward for examination when a suspicion arises.

I am indebted to Dr. Owen Clark, M.D., M.R.C.P., Consultant Chest Physician of the Medway and Gravesend Hospital Management Committee, for the following particulars regarding patients from the Sittingbourne area who received institutional treatment during 1952 :—

Institution	Patients
Bow Arrow Hospital, Dartford	5
Darvell Hall Sanatorium, Robertsbridge, Sussex	2
Eversfield Chest Hospital, West Hill, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex	1
Farnborough Hospital	1
Gildredge Hospital, Eastbourne, Sussex	1
Grove Park Hospital, London	1
Kettlewell Hospital, Swanley	3
Lenham Sanatorium, Nr. Maidstone	2
Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup	2
Seaford Sea Home, Sussex	1
St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester	1
Total	20

This indicates, that 11% of the patients on the Tuberculosis Register were admitted to Hospitals or Sanatoria for treatment during the year.

TABLE IX
Summary of Tuberculosis Register

	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Total
On Register on 1st Jan., 1952 ...	126	30	156
Notified as "new" cases ...	17	1	18
Transferred to District	3	—	3
Restored to Register	—	—	—
TOTALS ...	146	31	177
Died	3	—	3
Recovered	1	—	1
Removed from District	2	—	2
Diagnosis Changed	—	—	—
TOTALS ...	6	—	6
Balance remaining on Register on 31st December, 1952 ...	140	31	171

From the preceding table it will be seen that the number of patients on the Tuberculosis Register is still increasing. This is no doubt due to the fact that the patients are on that register for longer periods than previously.

I would again refer to the good and useful work done by the local voluntary Tuberculosis Care Committee in the local care of these patients.

During the period 27th to 31st March, 1952, a Mass Radiography Survey of the school leavers, teaching and non-teaching staff, was carried out at the Sittingbourne West Girls' County Secondary School. The survey included not only children and staff from that school, but from all other senior schools in Sittingbourne and adjoining parishes of the Swale Rural District. A total of 515 males and 637 females came under the survey. Of these, it was found necessary to recall for further large film examinations, 8 males and 11 females, but in the final result the survey showed that of all those examined there were only 2 cases of active Tuberculosis and 8 cases of inactive Tuberculosis. Of the active cases 1 was a canteen worker, aged 33 years, and the other a boy, aged 13 years. Of the inactive cases, 7 were pupils and one a teacher. So far as is known none of these had been previously notified. The percentage of active and inactive cases to the number of volunteers in the survey was 0.17% and 0.69% respectively.

3. VENEREAL DISEASES

The Medical Officers in charge of the Special Clinics at Rochester and Canterbury have again kindly supplied the following information regarding the cases and number of attendances from this district during the year. These are as follows :—

Disease	Males	Females	Total
Syphilis	2 (1)	— (2)	2 (3)*
Gonorrhoea	— (—)	— (1)	— (1)
Non-Venereal (Genital Lesions)	3 (8)	2 (1)	5 (9)
TOTALS ...	5 (9)	2 (4)	7 (13)

The above refer to new cases during the year.

The total number of patients under treatment, both old and new, from this district during 1952, was 14.

The total number of attendances was 191 as compared with 308 in 1951 and 424 in 1950.

Footnote :—* Figures in brackets relate to the preceding year

4. VACCINATIONS AND IMMUNISATIONS

(a) **Diphtheria Immunisation**

From the figures kindly supplied to me by the County Medical Officer, it is estimated that 58.2% of the children aged 0-4 years (inclusive), and 52.0% of the children aged 5-15 years (inclusive) were protected against Diphtheria by immunisation. The total percentage of children immunised at all ages under 15 years was 54.1%.

These figures show a gradual increase in the percentage immunised, taken over the past three years, but are still much below the percentage of children who should be immunised if the present immunity from Diphtheria is to be maintained. Not until at least 75% of all children in the area have been protected by immunisation can the position be considered to be reasonably safe.

During the year under review 268 primary inoculations and 175 reinforcing inoculations were carried out, as compared with 260 and 164 respectively in 1951 and 307 and 76 respectively in 1950.

(b) **Vaccination against Smallpox**

The returns received from the County Medical Officer show that 217 primary vaccinations and 38 re-vaccinations were carried out during the year, as against 251 and 58 respectively in 1951 and 201 and 28 respectively in 1950. Of the primary vaccinations only 174 were infants less than two years of age. These figures are too low for safety. As recent experiences have shown the possibility of the introduction and spread of Smallpox is ever with us and the danger of the introduction of the disease into this country has been greatly increased in recent years owing to much shorter travel periods resulting from increased use of air travel.

Section IV

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

1. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Local Authority Health Services under the National Health Service Act are provided and administered by the Kent County Council as the Local Health Authority. These Services include the Care of Mothers and Young Children ; the provision of Midwives ; Health Visiting and Home Nursing ; Vaccination and Immunisation ; Prevention of Illness, Care and After-Care and Domestic Help Services. Mental Welfare is provided by the Regional Hospital Board.

The various Clinics in connection with these Services are, by arrangement with the County Council, held at the Local Council's Health Department offices at Johnson House. The following list shows the dates and times of these Clinics.

Clinics and Sessions	Date	Time
Infant Welfare	Tuesday and Thursday	2 - 4 p.m.
Immunisation.	First Monday in each Month	2 - 3.15 p.m.
Ante-natal, Post-natal and Family Planning (by appointment)	Friday	10 a.m. to 12 noon.
Relaxation Classes (by appointment)	Thursday	10 - 11 a.m.
Mothercraft Classes	Thursday	11 a.m. to 12 noon.
Orthopaedic	Tuesday Friday	10 a.m. to 12 noon. 2 - 4.30 p.m.
Mental Health (by appointment)	Thursday	10 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
Pathologist	Wednesday	2.30 - 4 p.m.
Domestic Help	Wednesday	2 - 4 p.m.

(Note : Vaccinations are given at the Infant Welfare Clinic,
if required).

2. SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

(a) The County Medical Officer has again been good enough to provide me with a copy of the Annual Report on the School Health Services in the district during 1952, from which the following are interesting extracts :—

(i) Number of Children inspected (Periodic inspections)	1,521	(1,421)*
(ii) Number found requiring treatment ...	152	(98)
(iii) Percentage	9.9%	(6.8%)
(iv) Frequency of main defects found :—		
Orthopaedic defects	21.7%	(19.3%)
Eyes	49.3%	(45.9%)
Nose and Throat	5.2%	(9.1%)
Developmental (including hernia) ...	0.6%	(3.0%)
Ears	4.6%	(1.0%)

(b) The classification of children inspected in accordance with their general condition is as follows :—

	Number Inspected	A (Good)	B (Fair)	C (Poor)
Entrants	542	43.2% (43.9%)	54.8% (53.2%)	2.0% (2.9%)
Second Age Group	195	50.8% (41.4%)	48.2% (55.0%)	1.0% (3.6%)
Third Age Group	247	38.1% (40.0%)	60.7% (56.6%)	1.2% (3.4%)
Other Periodic Inspections ...	537	46.0% (36.8%)	53.4% (59.8%)	0.6% (3.4%)
	1,521	44.3% (41.0%)	54.4% (55.7%)	1.3% (3.3%)

These figures show that though there has been a slight increase in the percentage of children found at periodic inspections to require treatment (from 6.8% in 1951 to 9.9% in 1952) the general nutritional standard of the children inspected has improved. Those classified as being of good nutritional standard increased from 41% in 1951 to 44.3% in 1952. There has also been a decrease in the number classified of poor nutritional standard from 3.3% in 1951 to 1.3% in 1952.

In regard to the frequency of the main defects found it will be noted that eye diseases and defects form approximately 50% of the total defects found. This is a matter of serious concern.

(c) The total number of attendances at the minor ailment Clinics was 518, and 217 defects were treated or under treatment during the year. The majority of conditions treated were as follows :—

Minor injuries (including bruises, sores chilblains, etc.)	77.4%	(69.0%)*
Skin conditions	17.0%	(15.4%)
Eye diseases	4.6%	(11.3%)
Ear conditions	0.8%	(4.1%)

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

(d) Dental Inspections and treatment figures are as follows :—

Number inspected by Dental Officers ...	...	1,957	(2,045)
Number found requiring treatment ...	...	1,397	(731)
Percentage ...	...	71.3%	(35.7%)
Number actually treated ...	...	898	(399)
Percentage ...	...	45.8%	(19.5%)

(e) INFESTATION WITH VERMIN

The following information on examinations and treatment in connection with infestation with vermin in this area have been supplied by the County Medical Officer.

- (i) Total number of examinations in the schools by the school nurses or other authorised persons ... 7,128 (6,911)*
- (ii) Total number of individual pupils found to be infested ... 18 (45)
- (iii) Number of individual pupils in respect of whom cleansing notices were issued (Section 54 (2), Education Act, 1944) 6 (3)

In regard to the above figures it is very pleasing to note that the number of individual pupils found to be infested was less than half the number so found in the previous year and the actual figure, i.e., 18 out of 7,128 children inspected is very small.

3. LABORATORY SERVICES

The Pathologist's Clinic supplied by the Kent County Council at Johnson House, has been continued during the year.

Arrangements for attendance at this Clinic are made by the Staff of the local Health Department and the number of patients attending this Clinic has remained at a very high figure, i.e. 601 as compared with 602 in the previous year. This shows the importance of such a Clinic and the great help it must give to local Medical Practitioners, as well as to the patients themselves, by the continued use of local premises for the carrying on of this very important Service.

The following Table shows the number of patients attending the Clinic during the past five years.

TABLE X

Year	No. of Patients Attending
1948 ...	235
1949 ...	372
1950 ...	432
1951 ...	602
1952 ...	601

Footnote :—* Figures in brackets relate to the preceding year

The number of Patients attending this Clinic during the first six months of 1953 was 339, which shows that more Patients than ever are being dealt with at the Clinic.

4. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948. (SECTION 50).

One case was dealt with during the year following a notification from the Police that a woman had been found dead. No relative was in a position to arrange for the funeral and this was therefore carried out under the authority of the above-named Act and Section.

5. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948. (SECTION 47).

As amended by NATIONAL ASSISTANCE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1951. (SECTION 1).

During the year the conditions of two aged persons who were living alone were under consideration by the Department. In one case it was found necessary to obtain a Magistrate's Order under the Act for the removal of the person concerned to suitable hospital accommodation. In the second case it was possible by persuasion to obtain the consent of the old person for her removal to Hospital.

6. OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE

The difficulty of dealing with aged persons living alone frequently raises very serious and anxious problems. Many of them would be better in Hospitals or Institutions, but there is the not unnatural reluctance of these old people to leave their own home which, in so many cases, has been their home for many years and where they have their own goods and pieces beside them. There is also perhaps the unnecessary fear that should they go into an Institution they not only lose their freedom but lose contact with their old neighbours. Apart from the reluctance of these old people to go into Hospitals and Homes, there is also the admitted National lack of sufficient accommodation for these people.

To assist these aged folk still living at home, a voluntary Organisation—the Old People's Welfare Committee—was, at the request of and with the help of the Local Council, formed for this area and since its inception this Organisation, which works in conjunction with the Kent Branch of the National Council of Social Service, has done much good work in visiting these aged persons, especially those who by reason of their physical incapacity are more or less housebound. A panel of visitors has been formed who visit these cases periodically to help them with their little personal problems which are always arising and try to generally brighten up their otherwise solitary lives.

In addition to the Welfare Committee there are two very successful Old People's Clubs in the Town, one of which is run by the Old People themselves and the other by another Voluntary Organisation. These meet regularly at convenient meeting places in the Town, at which there is organised and provided many forms of entertainment for the benefit of these old people.

Section V

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. WATER SUPPLY

(a) The water supply for the Urban District is derived from two sources, i.e. the Sittingbourne and Milton Urban District water undertaking and the Mid-Kent Water Company. The supply has been adequate both in quantity and quality. Forty-three samples were submitted for examination. All were satisfactory.

(b) Further progress has been made in providing a piped water supply within the dwelling in the few cases where this is not already provided. The majority of these comprise houses within the Council's slum clearance programme.

2. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

(a) Little alteration has been made in the Council Sewerage System during the year.

(b) Difficulties have been experienced with regard to the treatment of sewage at the Works and consequently the quality of the effluent has not been satisfactory. An investigation is at present being carried out by the Council's Consultants so that the necessary steps can be taken to ensure that the quality of the effluent reaches satisfactory standards.

(c) A number of cesspools have been abolished during the year and the premises connected to the Council Sewerage System. Cesspools in an urbanised area are always a potential danger to public health and it is therefore regretted that owners of property with cesspool drainage do not take advantage of the Council's sewer in the many cases where this is available.

(d) Systematic treatment of the Sewerage System against rat infestation was carried out on two occasions during the year. Whilst there does not appear to be a heavy incidence of infestation in the sewers, nevertheless the results indicated that there continues to be a small residual rodent population.

3. MILTON CREEK

During the year the position so far as pollution of the Creek was concerned gave concern to the Department and as a result six samples of various effluents flowing into the Creek were submitted for analysis to the Public Analyst. His Report indicated generally that the effluents going into the Creek were of a polluting nature.

As a result consultation took place with the Kent River Board when it was agreed that the Board should institute an investigation into the pollution of the Creek generally and that on the results of the investigation consideration would be given to what action could be taken to reduce such pollution. The investigation has commenced but is as yet incomplete.

4. SCAVENGING

(a) The administration of the Council's refuse collection and disposal service is under the Engineer and Surveyor. Disposal is by means of tipping. The attempts to reduce fly breeding by means of Gammexane dust do not appear to be entirely satisfactory for large numbers of flies continue to breed in the tip during the warmer months of the year. Difficulty in controlling flies is no doubt due to the deep tipping faces which render the application of the insecticide somewhat difficult and costly. This problem will have to be faced with renewed determination, particularly having regard to the construction of the North Court Housing Estate quite near to the Tip.

(b) Townspeople continued to dump rubbish on vacant plots of ground throughout the town, but happily on a somewhat reduced scale compared to previous years. Nevertheless, there still appears to be a lack of proper consideration by some townspeople. It is to be hoped that the improvement seen will continue so that the town can be kept in a clean, tidy and sanitary condition to the benefit of all.

5. SCHOOL SANITATION

The sanitary accommodation provided is maintained in a satisfactory manner. During the year the Barrow Grove school was opened. This school, like the West County Secondary School, provides first class amenities for the children.

Periodic visits were paid to the School Canteens during the year and generally the standard of hygiene was satisfactory.

6. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Public conveniences are generally well maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Until all public conveniences are provided with washing facilities the principles of personal hygiene which are put forward by your officers and which are being increasingly accepted by the public, cannot be achieved by members of the public using the conveniences.

7. PUBLIC SWIMMING BATHS

(a) The Swimming Baths continue to be enjoyed by large numbers of bathers.

(b) The quality of the water was generally maintained in a satisfactory condition. This is somewhat difficult at the present time because the facilities available to the Baths' Superintendent do not enable him to measure accurately the dosage of the various chemicals required to carry out the treatment of water. It is recommended that the Council give full consideration to this matter as well as the provision of adequate laundry facilities when they consider improvements at the Baths.

8. MORTUARY ACCOMMODATION

Little progress has been made towards the provision of suitable and adequate Mortuary accommodation for the town in spite of many efforts. The matter is still being pursued and no doubt finality will eventually be reached and suitable accommodation provided. In the meantime though the accommodation at present in use remains unsatisfactory, the premises so far as general hygiene is concerned are maintained in a satisfactory manner. From January, 1952, the duties of washing and preparing bodies have been carried out by a local firm of undertakers. The arrangements have proved very satisfactory.

9. SERVICE OF NOTICES REQUIRING THE EXECUTION OF WORKS OR THE ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

- (a) 449 informal notices served (487)*
- (b) 85 statutory notices served (90)
- (c) 364 informal notices complied with (434)
- (d) 69 statutory notices complied with (80)

10. VISITS MADE BY THE SANITARY INSPECTORS

The number of visits paid by the Sanitary Inspectors during the year is show in Appendix "C."

Footnote :—* Figures in brackets relate to the preceding year

Section VI

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

1. MILK SUPPLY

(a) The following are the details of registrations under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949, the Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949, and the Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949.

(i) Registered milk distributors	46
(ii) Distributors licensed to deal in Pasteurised Milk	7
(iii) Distributors licensed to sell Sterilised Milk	30
(iv) Distributors licensed to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk	2
(v) Supplementary licenses for the sale of Tuberculin Tested Milk	2
(vi) Supplementary licenses for the sale of Pasteurised Milk	2

(b) There has been a considerable increase in the number of distributors of sterilised milk. This was due to the freeing of milk supplies and the consequent drive by firms interested in the sale of sterilised milk to introduce this class of milk in the area.

(c) Examination of Milk Supplies

(i) 24 samples of milk were submitted for bacteriological or other prescribed examination at the County Laboratory, Maidstone. The following table shows details of the results obtained:—

TABLE XI

Designation	No. of Samples	Result	
		Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Ordinary Milk	5 (—)	4 (—)	1 (—)*
Pasteurised and Heat-treated Milks	15 (22)	13 (17)	2 (5)
Tuberculin Tested Milk	4 (—)	3 (—)	1 (—)
TOTAL ...	24 (22)	20 (17)	4 (5)

(ii) 6 samples of raw milk were submitted for biological examination during the year. All samples were free from Tubercle infection.

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

2. MEAT

(i) Three hundred and fifty-two visits were paid to the Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse, East Street, Sittingbourne. Owing to the serious Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak the Slaughterhouse was closed during the month of July. One hundred per cent. inspection of all animals presented for slaughter was maintained throughout the year. This work continued to involve the Sanitary Inspectors in late night, Sunday and holiday work.

(ii) Two outbreaks of suspected swine fever were reported to the Diseases of Animals Authority as a result of post-mortem findings in the slaughterhouse. One outbreak was confirmed. With regard to the other outbreak which was not confirmed, considerable difficulty was experienced in forming an opinion as to the condition affecting the pigs. The position was obscured by the possibility that the pigs had ingested Warfarin (Warfarin is an anti-blood coagulant used in rodent control). This possibility was kindly investigated by Mr. Monk, Kent County Public Analyst but in spite of exhaustive tests it was not possible to demonstrate that the pigs had in fact consumed Warfarin. The position was further complicated by the fact that other pigs from the same pig-keeper developed symptoms of paralysis, particularly of the hind-quarter, and died. Post-mortem finding did not reveal the cause of death and it was concluded that the pigs had been infected with a virus, but this opinion was unfortunately never satisfactorily substantiated. All the pigs in the ownership of the pig-keeper were slaughtered, the sty thoroughly disinfected and left vacant for some weeks. New stock introduced to the sty after the treatment outlined thrived and there has so far been no recurrence of the illness.

(iii) In order to assist your Sanitary Inspectors in diagnosis and to confirm diagnosis, 3 specimens were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, Maidstone. It is gratifying to record that the utmost co-operation and help was received by your Officers. It would nevertheless be of considerable further assistance if access to a specialist laboratory dealing with animal pathology was made available.

(iv) Slaughtering continued during the year in the obsolete premises at present used as a slaughterhouse. No improvements of any moment were made. In spite of repeated requests for the provision of a supply of running hot water over the sink in the slaughterhouse, for personal washing, nothing was done during the year. Apparently the Ministry of Food are unable to decide whether or not the existing premises are to continue in use as a slaughterhouse. In the meantime, slaughtering staff and the Inspectors have to put up with inadequate and makeshift arrangements for hand-washing.

(v) Table XII shows the details of the animals slaughtered, together with the numbers affected with disease. The figures relating to Tuberculosis and other diseases affecting animals presented for slaughter show little significant change from those of the previous year.

TABLE XII

	Cattle, excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Total
Number Killed	1115	174	204	2975	963	5431
Number Inspected ...	1115	174	204	2975	963	5431
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS						
Whole carcasses condemned	2	1	—	29	7	39
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	298	81	1	313	108	801
Percentage of the number inspected affected with diseases other than Tuberculosis	26.9	47.1	0.4	11.4	11.9	(12.6)* 15.4
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY						
Whole carcasses condemned	4	4	—	—	—	8
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	98	43	1	—	15	157
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	9.1	21.2	0.4	—	1.6	(3.5)* 3.0

3. OTHER FOODSTUFFS EXAMINED

(i) The details of foodstuffs of all types condemned during the year are shown in Appendix "B."

(ii) During the year 12 samples of food were submitted for examination as detailed below:—

5 samples of water-cress for bacteriological examination.

4 samples of canned fish products for metallic contamination.

3 samples of Raspberry pulp for bacteriological and chemical examination.

Footnote :—* Figures in brackets relate to the preceding year

As a result of the Analyst's report in connection with one of the samples of Fish products, which indicated an unsafe degree of metallic contamination, the stocks existing locally were withdrawn from sale and destroyed. The Head Office of the firm involved was notified and immediate steps were taken to withdraw the particular product from all their branches.

4. SHELLFISH

No case of illness attributable to shellfish was notified during the year. The public are again reminded that the purchase of shellfish from any dealers other than reputable and well established firms involves serious risks to themselves.

5. FISH FRYING

- (i) Seven fish frying establishments are in operation in the area.
- (ii) Twenty-five visits of inspection were made during the year.
- (iii) Inspection shows that a high standard of sanitary practice is maintained in this particular food trade.

6. ICE CREAM

(i) (a) The number of premises registered for the manufacture, storage or sale of ice cream are :—

Sale and storage of ice cream ...	89	(79)*
Storage of ice cream ...	3	(4)
Manufacture of ice cream ...	11	(10)

(b) The number of premises registered for the sale of ice cream again increased during the year, ten additional applicants being registered. The change over from bulk to pre-packed ice cream continues and comparatively small quantities of ice cream from bulk is sold to the public. Little difficulty was experienced in supervising this trade.

(ii) Thirty-six samples of ice cream were submitted for examination by the Provisional Modified Methylene Blue Reductase Test, with the following results :—

			1952	1951
Grade I	...	...	24 (66.6%)	22 (81.4%)
Grade II	...	...	9 (25.0%)	—
Grade III	...	...	2 (5.5%)	2 (7.4%)
Grade IV	...	...	1 (2.7%)	3 (11.1%)

The apparent improvement in the hygienic quality of ice cream, as judged by the Provisional Modified Methylene Blue Test,

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

noted last year, continued throughout the year under review. No less than 91.6% of the samples attained Grade I or II whilst only 2.7% fell into Grade IV.

7. BAKEHOUSES

Eight bakehouses are registered and in operation in the area.

8. RESTAURANT KITCHENS

(i) The number of restaurant kitchens (including works canteens and school kitchens) in the area is 34.

(ii) The premises on the whole are conducted in a satisfactory manner. The need for scrupulous standards of hygiene to avoid the potential risks inherent in food handling is constantly kept before the workers employed in the trade during inspections.

9. PUBLIC HOUSES

A detailed survey of all the public houses in the town was carried out during the year. Particular attention was directed to the provision of wash-up sinks and the supply of hot running water over the sink. In all cases where a deficiency was noted the matter was taken up with the Brewers concerned. Although all the work required has not yet been carried out the response from the Brewers was very encouraging.

10. FOOD PREPARING PREMISES

(i) Twenty-one premises are registered for the manufacture of sausage and preserved foods.

(ii) The premises are generally maintained in a satisfactory manner and it is pleasing to record the willingness of many of the people concerned to carry out voluntary schemes of improvement after taking the Department's advice.

11. GENERAL HYGIENE IN FOOD PREMISES

Consultations took place with the Local Chamber of Trade concerning the issue to all food traders for display at their premises of notices requesting customers, in the interests of hygiene, to refrain from taking dogs into food premises. The Chamber of Trade gave their wholehearted support to the Council and as a result notices were issued to all shopkeepers engaged in the food trade. Since the beginning of March, 1952 the notices have been displayed in a prominent position and there is no doubt that they have been effec-

tive in securing proper control of dogs entering such premises. So far as I can ascertain no difficulty has been experienced in carrying out the request.

12. DETAILS OF INSPECTIONS

Shown in Appendix "C".

13. SAMPLES TAKEN BY THE FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY

By courtesy of the Chief Inspector, Weights and Measures Department, the following detail of samples of food taken under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, in Sittingbourne and Milton are included:—

Article	No. of Samples
Absorbent Lozenges	1
Adrenalin Cream	1
Artificial Raspberry Vinegar	1
Bi-carbonate of Soda	1
Bisodal Powder	1
Bitter Beer	1
Brandy	1
Calciferol Tablets	4
Calogen	1
Camphorated Oil	1
Cheese and Tomato Paste	1
Cherry Flavour	1
Chest Herbs	1
Chicken and Ham Paste	1
Coconut Chips	1
Coffee and Chicory Extract	1
Condensed Milk—Skimmed	1
Condensed Milk—Full Cream	1
Dessicated Coconut	1
Dressed Crab	1
Fibodral Cream	1
Fruit Cake	1
Fruit Laxative Syrup	1
Glycerine Substitute	1
Ground Cinnamon	1
Ground Rice	1
Cheese Spread	1
Ground White Pepper	1
Jelly	1
Kandy Korn	1
Kompo	1
Lemonade Powder	1
Lime Juice Cordial	1
Long Egg Spaghetti	1
Luncheon Meat	1
Meat Pies	1
Milk	31
Non-Brewed Condiment	1
Orange Crush	1
Pineapple Conserve	1
Processed Peas	1
Pure Malt Vinegar	1
Raspberryade Powder	1
Rice Custard Powder	1
Robert's Croupline	1
Salad Cream	1
Sunnybisk	1
Table Jelly Crystals	1
Tablets Hexaminæ B.P.	1
Whisky	2
Wild Duck Paste	1
Yeast Vite Tablets	1
TOTAL	86

SUMMARY

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
Drugs	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Spirits	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other Samples	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
							—
							86
							—

All the above samples were genuine with the exception of the following :—

Sample of	Analysis	Action taken
Artificial Raspberry Vinegar	Inferior. Doubtful, in view of the High Court Case on artificial vinegar, if the name of this product can be justified.	Seller will discontinue the use of the word "vinegar."
Chest Herbs	Inferior. Contains marsh-mallow (root not herb), linseed and Irish moss in correct amounts. Liquorice and bayberry also present but in less amounts. Also contains leaves resembling coltsfoot.	Caution issued.
Fibodral Cream	Inferior. Adrenalin 0.003%	Manufacturer cautioned.
Calciferol Tablets	Inferior. Appear deficient in Calciferol.	} Old Stock. Withdrawn from sale.
Calciferol Tablets	Adulterated. Contains no Vitamin D.	
Milk	Adulterated. Contained 2.1% added water.	} Supplier cautioned. Further samples to be taken.
Milk	Adulterated. Contained 2.5% added water.	
Milk	Adulterated. Contained 3.5% added water.	

Section VII

DISINFECTION, DISINFESTATION AND RODENT CONTROL

1. DISINFECTION

(i) Seventy-eight rooms at 56 premises were disinfected on account of infectious disease. A ward at the Memorial Hospital was disinfected on account of infectious disease and slippers at Milton Butts School were treated on two occasions during the year. A lorry was disinfected after animals suffering from Swine Fever had been conveyed therein. Three parcels of clothing for export were disinfected and the necessary certificates issued.

(ii) All library books found at premises where a case of notifiable disease has occurred are disinfected by formaldehyde before being returned to circulation.

(iii) The steam disinfector at the Milton Hospital continues to be used for Council purposes by the courtesy of the Medway and Gravesend Hospital Management Committee. It should be recorded that every assistance and co-operation is received from the Administrator of the Hospital and his Staff in carrying out this work.

2. DISINFESTATION

(i) The following tables indicate the work carried out during the year:—

(a) Bed Bugs

			Infestations	
			Premises	Rooms
Council Houses	...	...	4	10
Other Houses	...	...	23	56
			—	—
Totals	...		27	66
			—	—

(b) Fleas

Council Houses	...	...	1	3
Other Houses	...	...	8	25
Other Premises	...	...	1	1
			—	—
Totals	...		10	29
			—	—

(c) Other Insect Pests

(Ants, Beetles and Flies)

Council Houses	...	...	4	4
Other Houses	...	...	5	7
Other Premises	...	...	—	—
			—	—
Totals	...		9	11
			—	—

(ii) In addition 34 wasps' and bees' nests were dealt with. The usual anti-mosquito measures were carried out in the static water tanks and ponds.

(iii) The main insecticides used during the year were 5% D.D.T. in Kerosene and Gammexane.

3. RODENT CONTROL

(i) The Council employ one part-time Rodent Operator.

(ii) The following table gives details of the work carried out during the year:—

TABLE XIII

	Type of Property				
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	All other (including business premises)	Total
i. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District.	17 (17)	6378 (6275)	76 (75)	497 (496)	6968 (6863)*
ii. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority during 1952 as a result of (a) notification (b) survey or otherwise.	(a) 2 (9)	106 (64)	6 (3)	40 (33)	154 (109)
	(b) 4 (12)	198 (159)	15 (9)	26 (48)	243 (228)
iii. Number of properties (under ii) found to be infested by rats.	Major 4 (6)	— (—)	5 (1)	8 (—)	17 (7)
	Minor 1 (3)	134 (64)	5 (4)	25 (21)	165 (92)
iv. Number of properties inspected (see Section ii) which were found to be seriously infested by mice.	1 (6)	70 (18)	— (—)	17 (31)	88 (55)
v. Number of infested properties (see Sections iii and iv) treated by the Local Authority.	6 (15)	204 (82)	10 (5)	50 (52)	270 (154)

(iii) The number of visits made (including routine survey) during the year, was 2,688, as against 2,872 in the previous year.

(iv) The estimated number of Rats killed by poisons was 1,293, as against 1,609 in 1951. In addition, 45 rats and 29 mice were killed by trapping, as compared with 49 and 80 respectively in the previous year.

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

(v) Maintenance treatments of the Council's sewerage system were continued during the year. Again the available evidence showed that the system was not subjected to a heavy degree of infestation but this position is only maintained by a continuance of the systematic periodic treatment.

(vi) The number of infestations reported and found on independent survey showed a marked increase during the year. Happily the infestations found were of a minor character and were readily dealt with. The value of comprehensive survey, not only at ground level but in the drainage systems attached to infested premises, was emphasised during the year as the cause of a number of infestations were found to be due to defective drains. After treatment and repair or re-laying of the drainage system, the infestation was readily cleared up and no further infestation took place. The co-operation of the public by giving early notice of infestation has been of valuable assistance to the Department and it is hoped that it will continue.

Section VIII

HOUSING

1. INSPECTIONS

The number and character of inspections carried out in connection with housing is as follows:—

(a) Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year for housing defects	433	(548)*
(b) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidation Regulations ...	18	(5)
(c) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	23	(18)
(d) Number of houses found defective in some essential particular	449	(487)
(e) Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notice	364	(434)
(f) Reinspections of houses	2,889	(2,247)
(g) Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—		
(i) Proceedings under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936	—	(—)
(ii) Proceedings under Public Health Act	85	(90)
(iii) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 ...	—	(5)
(iv) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936	—	(—)
(v) Action under Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936:—		

No. of areas represented as unfit.	No. of dwellings in the areas	No. of dwellings demolished during the year.
2	13	4

(h) New Houses:—

(i) Total number erected by Local Authority during year	138	(96)
(ii) Total number erected by Private Persons during year	4	(10)
(iii) Total number of War Destroyed Houses re-built during year ...	—	(2)

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

2. REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF HOUSES

(a) The effects of the Rent Restrictions Acts and the continued high level of building costs continue to have an adverse effect on the efforts of the Department to maintain existing houses in a satisfactory state of repair. Nevertheless every effort is made to ensure that houses are kept in a weatherproof condition and sanitary appliances working satisfactorily.

(b) Appendix "E" sets out a joint report of the Medical Officer of Health and the Chief Sanitary Inspector which was submitted to the Council during October, 1952 on the subject of Housing and Slum Clearance. Although the Council at that time were unable to accept the whole of the proposed 8 years' programme, authority was given for the implementation of the first 2 years' programme involving the demolition of some 55 houses.

3. HOUSING MANAGEMENT

The work of the Sanitary Department in dealing with the investigations, interviewing, pointing and reporting upon housing applications which had been carried out since 1945 was reviewed by a Sub-Committee of the Council in view of the impact of this work on the other functions of the Department.

It was finally decided by the Council that this work be taken out of the Department and transferred to a separate Housing Officer as from the 1st April, 1952.

4. RE-HOUSING

(i) During the year it was found possible to provide housing accommodation for 226 families, as follows:—

- (a) 11 families re-housed in existing temporary houses (4)*
- (b) 21 families re-housed in pre-war Council houses (15)
- (c) 173 families re-housed in post-war Council houses (108)
- (d) 21 families re-housed in privately owned houses by arrangement with the owner's consent (13).

(ii) In addition to the above-mentioned families re-housed by the Council, it is known that 15 applicants found accommodation privately and that 5 further applicants were re-housed by other Authorities.

(iii) It has been decided by the Council that the use of the Huts at Kemsley Camp for housing purposes should cease as soon as possible. In pursuance of this decision therefore no fresh families have been housed at the Camp during the year. It is the intention of the Council that this Camp shall cease to be used for housing purposes by 31st December, 1953.

5. COMMON LODGING HOUSE

One Common Lodging House is registered, the accommodation available being 30 beds. The premises were managed in a reasonably satisfactory manner.

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

Section IX

FACTORY ADMINISTRATION

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

During the year a special survey was made of the whole of the factories in the Urban District and in consultation with H.M. Inspector of Factories an up-to-date register was prepared.

(i) Number of Factories on Register:—

(a) Factories (Mechanical Power) ...	93
(b) Factories (No Mechanical Power) ...	11
(c) Other Premises ...	2

(ii) Number of Inspections:—

(a) Factories (Mechanical Power) ...	192
(b) Factories (No Mechanical Power) ...	18
(c) Other Premises ...	2

(iii) Number of Written Notices:—

(a) Factories (Mechanical Power) ...	17
(b) Factories (No Mechanical Power) ...	1

(iv) Cases in which defects were found:—

Particulars	Found	Remedied	Referred	
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ...	2	1	—	1
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ...	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)—				
(a) insufficient ...	2	2	—	—
(b) unsuitable or defective ...	17	16	—	2
(c) not separate for sexes ...	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ...	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	21	19	—	3

APPENDIX "A"

RAINFALL

RECORDED AT HIGHTSTED WATERWORKS

			Rainfall (inches)				
Month			1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
January	...	...	3.61	1.37	2.00	2.98	2.31
February	...	...	1.75	1.22	4.49	6.66	.96
March	...	...	.87	.80	.71	3.53	3.89
April	...	...	1.71	1.50	2.16	2.27	.98
May	...	...	1.81	1.86	1.99	2.17	.90
June	...	...	3.27	.76	1.06	1.67	1.19
July	...	...	1.62	.42	2.32	2.05	.71
August	...	...	2.66	.52	2.38	4.72	3.10
September	...	...	1.59	1.81	2.11	3.84	4.04
October	...	...	1.53	6.86	.20	1.08	2.23
November	...	...	1.50	3.37	5.45	3.81	4.38
December	...	...	3.42	1.56	2.33	2.41	2.57
			—	—	—	—	—
Total Rainfall			25.34	22.05	27.20	37.19	27.26
			—	—	—	—	—

APPENDIX "B"

DETAILS OF FOODSTUFFS OF ALL TYPES CONDEMNED DURING 1952

			lbs.
3 Cattle (excluding Cows)	Generalised Tuberculosis ...		1,521
5 Cows	Ditto.		2,745
1 Cattle (excluding Cows)	Pyrexia and Oedema ...		397
1 Cow	Acute Peritonitis & Pleurisy		349
1 Cow	Emaciation and Oedema ...		291
19 Portions of Cattle	Localised Tuberculosis ...		2,439
1 Portion of Cattle	Oedema		12
4 Portions of Cattle	Bruising		51
1 Portion of Cattle	Fracture		22
3 Portions of Cattle	Abscess		57
7 Sheep	Oedema		206
14 Sheep	Emaciation and Oedema ...		501
1 Sheep	Emaciation		30
1 Sheep	Bruising and Oedema ...		46
1 Sheep	Bruising and Laceration ...		37
1 Sheep	Toxaemia		71
3 Sheep	Moribund		177
1 Ram	Emaciation and Oedema ...		60
3 Portions of Sheep	Oedema		22
2 Portions of Sheep	Injury		11
1 Portion of Sheep	Bruising		11
1 Portion of Sheep	Bruising and Laceration ..		52
1 Portion of Sheep	Injuries and Bruising ...		8
4 Pigs	Septicaemia		401
1 Pig	Swine Fever		89
1 Pig	Acute Swine Erysipelas ..		100
1 Sow	Pyrexia		176
1 Sow	Generalised Tuberculosis ...		189
10 Portions of Pig	Localised Tuberculosis ...		241
3 Portions of Pig	Abscess		32
1 Portion of Pig	Fracture		7
2 Portions of Pig	Deformity		11
1 Portion of Sow	Localised Tuberculosis ...		24
Edible Offal			14,205 $\frac{1}{4}$
Other Meat			1,002
Fish			168
Tinned Fruit Pulp ...			48,576
Miscellaneous Foodstuffs: including canned Milk, Meat, Fruit, Vegetables, Fish, Eggs, Jams, etc. ...			3,128 $\frac{1}{4}$
TOTAL LBS. ...			77,465 $\frac{1}{2}$ (32,501 $\frac{3}{4}$)*
TOTAL. — 34 Tons 11 Cwts. 2 Qrs. 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ Lbs. (14 Tons 10 Cwts. 0 Qrs. 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ Lbs.)			

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

APPENDIX "C"

DETAILS OF INSPECTION

Inspection of Houses						Inspections
No. of Houses inspected (Public Health and Housing Acts)						
First inspections—not visits	...	...	...	...	...	433
No. of Houses reinspected	...	...	...	...	...	2889
No. of Houses inspected and recorded (S.5 Housing Act)						18
No. of Premises (other than houses and not mentioned below)						
inspected for nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	31
						— 3371
Overcrowding						
No. of dwellings overcrowded						4
No. of overcrowded families						3
						— 5
Premises						
Accumulations	...	...	...	...	...	38
Butchers	...	...	...	...	...	45
Cinemas and Amusement Places	...	...	...	...	...	9
Common Lodging Houses	...	...	...	...	...	13
Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	...	1
Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	...	...	...	55
Fresh fish shops	...	...	...	...	...	14
Fried fish and chip shops	...	...	...	...	...	25
Fruit and vegetable shops	...	...	...	...	...	16
Food vehicles	...	...	...	...	...	3
Houses let-in-lodgings	...	...	...	...	...	11
Ice-cream premises	...	...	...	...	...	132
Markets	...	...	...	...	...	13
Milk Vehicles	...	...	...	...	...	3
Mortuary	...	...	...	...	...	2
Offensive trades	...	...	...	...	...	3
Offices	...	...	...	...	...	16
Outworkers	...	...	...	...	...	7
Pets shop	...	...	...	...	...	5
Piggeries	...	...	...	...	...	18
Premises to examine foodstuffs	...	...	...	...	...	149
Provision shops	...	...	...	...	...	123
Public conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	18
Public Houses	...	...	...	...	...	154
Restaurants and restaurant kitchens	...	...	...	...	...	56
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	6
Shops (under Shops Act)	...	...	...	...	...	44
Shops (reinspections)	...	...	...	...	...	26
Food Preparing Premises	...	...	...	...	...	44
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	352
Smoke Observations	...	...	...	...	...	2
Static Water Tanks	...	...	...	...	...	5
Swimming Baths	...	...	...	...	...	4
Systematic inspection of district	...	...	...	...	...	11
Tents, Vans and Sheds, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	37
Tips	...	...	...	...	...	9
Water courses	...	...	...	...	...	21
Work places	...	...	...	...	...	2
						— 1492
Rat Infestation (not recorded elsewhere)						
Houses inspected (first inspections)						17
Houses inspected (reinspections)						7

Other premises (first inspections)	13	
Other premises (reinspections)	7	
	<hr/>	44
Enquiries or Visits		
Contractors or owners interviewed	267	
Contacts of infectious diseases	22	
Notifiable diseases	29	
Other diseases	33	
Miscellaneous	355	
Rent Restriction Acts	2	
Office Interviews	504	
Rivers—Pollution	9	
Kemsley Camp	2	
Housing Management Enquiries	86	
Port Visits	2	
Lectures	8	
	<hr/>	1319
Food and Drugs and Other Sampling		
Samples of Ice Cream	36	
Samples of Swimming Bath Water	6	
Samples of Water obtained—Bacteriological Examination	45	
Samples of Water obtained—Chemical Examination	2	
Samples of Milk obtained, bacteriological	24	
Samples of Milk obtained, biological	6	
Miscellaneous Bacteriological Specimens	20	
	<hr/>	139
Factories		
Factories with mechanical power—Bakehouses	34	
—Miscellaneous	158	
Factories without mechanical power—Bakehouses	1	
—Miscellaneous	17	
	<hr/>	210
TOTAL	<hr/>	6,580
		*(7,725)

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

APPENDIX "D"

NUISANCES AND DEFECTS REMEDIED DURING 1952

Works Executed						Totals
Shops Act						
Heating Apparatus Provided or Repaired	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sanitary Conveniences repaired	...	...	...	...	...	4
						5
Houses						
Accumulations removed	...	...	...	...	...	6
Ashbins provided	...	...	...	...	...	55
Brickwork of walls repaired	...	...	...	...	...	31
Chimneys repaired	...	...	...	...	...	29
Ceilings repaired	...	...	...	...	...	37
Doors and frames repaired	...	...	...	...	...	15
Entries inserted in Rent Book	...	...	...	...	...	2
Floors renewed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	37
Grates or ovens repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	...	31
Inside plastering repaired	...	...	...	...	...	79
Miscellaneous repairs and nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	...	2
Nuisances from animals abated	...	...	...	...	...	3
Outside plastering repaired	...	...	...	...	...	5
Obstructive outbuildings demolished	...	...	...	...	...	1
Roofs renewed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	106
Rainwater pipes on gutters renewed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	54
Staircases repaired	...	...	...	...	...	5
Walls or ceilings cleansed and redecorated	...	...	...	...	...	13
Wash-houses provided or improved	...	...	...	...	...	1
Washing coppers provided or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	16
Water supply provided	...	...	...	...	...	2
Water taps or pipes repaired	...	...	...	...	...	18
Window cords renewed	...	...	...	...	...	30
Window sashes or frames renewed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	42
Yard paving relaid or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	3
						623
Drainage						
Drains tested, smoke	...	...	...	...	...	81
Drains tested, chemical	...	...	...	...	...	13
Drains tested, water	...	...	...	...	...	18
Drains re-laid	...	...	...	...	...	17
Drains repaired	...	...	...	...	...	9
Drains cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	21
Gullies fixed	...	...	...	...	...	10
Inspection or Interception chambers provided	...	...	...	...	...	12
Inspection or Interception chambers repaired	...	...	...	...	...	7
New drains constructed	...	...	...	...	...	8
Soil pipes or ventilating shafts fixed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	3
Sinks provided	...	...	...	...	...	5
Sinks trapped or waste pipes repaired	...	...	...	...	...	5
						209
Water Closets						
Additional water closets provided	...	...	...	...	...	2
Flushing apparatus provided	...	...	...	...	...	3
Flushing apparatus repaired	...	...	...	...	...	58
Lighting and ventilation improved	...	...	...	...	...	1
Miscellaneous repairs	...	...	...	...	...	41
New pans and traps fixed	...	...	...	...	...	25
Water closets cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	3
						133

Cesspools and Septic Tanks

Abolished and house connected to sewer	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Emptied	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Made airtight	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Made watertight	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	
Other repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	
							—	13

Cinemas and Places of Entertainment

Cleanliness improved	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Water closets repaired	..	...	...	...	...	...	1	
							—	2

Urinals

Additional provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Flushing apparatus fixed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Lighting and ventilation improved	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Other repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	
Re-constructed	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Walls repaired or made impervious	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
							—	9

Earth or Pail Closets

Abolished	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	
Provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	
							—	4

Tents, Vans, Sheds

Removed		1
---------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	--	---

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops

Drainage improved	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Existing dairies improved	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Other repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
							—	3

Ice Cream Premises

Floors, Walls and Ceilings repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	
Limewashing or cleansing carried out	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
							—	3

Food Shops, Kitchens and Premises used for Preparation or Manufacture of Preserved Foods

Accumulations removed	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Ashbins provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	
Cleanliness improved	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	
Other repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	
Storage arrangements improved	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Washing-up sinks fixed	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	
Water supply provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	
							—	38

Food Vehicles

Warnings regarding general cleanliness of vehicle, person or covering		2
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	--	---

Slaughterhouses

Limewashing or cleansing carried out					1
--------------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	--	--	--	--	---

TOTAL 1,046

*(1,040)

Footnote.—* Figures in brackets relate to preceding year.

APPENDIX " E "

Report of Medical Officer of Health and Chief Sanitary Inspector on Housing and Slum Clearance.

The Council have been informed from time to time that many occupied houses in the town are, by reason of the narrowness and bad arrangement of the streets, disrepair and sanitary defects, unfit for human habitation.

In addition to the houses which are considered unfit for habitation there is a larger number which are falling into a serious state of disrepair. The main causes of this deterioration are (1) that it was extremely difficult and in some cases impossible to carry out normal maintenance during the war years, (2) since 1945 cost of building works has materially increased and (3) rents of houses are restricted to the pre-war level by reason of the provisions of the Rent Restrictions Acts. In these circumstances many owners find it uneconomic to carry out satisfactory repairs.

Dealing with the problem of slum clearance first. It is within the knowledge of the Council that a certain amount of progress has been made during the past few years. For example, the Flushing Street Clearance Area has been cleared, several individual unfit houses have been demolished and others closed, two Clearance Orders relating to Gas Road and King Street (Part) are at present awaiting Ministerial confirmation, and arrangements have been mutually agreed between the owners and the Council with regard to the closing and demolition of houses in Bell Road and High Street, Milton, as and when they become vacant. The total of houses thus dealt with is 54.

Unfortunately this effort, although effective so far as it has gone, has been of a somewhat patch-like quality and so far it has not been possible to utilize the sites made available for the improvement of the town.

It is clear that a more resolute and ambitious attack must be made if it is desired to solve this serious problem within a reasonable time. We suggest that it is appropriate at this time for the Council to consider the acceptance and implementation of a planned programme of slum clearance.

There are approximately some 300 houses in the town which are at the present time unfit for habitation and which ought to be demolished.

The provision of houses to re-house the families to be displaced in slum clearance schemes is fundamental and the Council must be in a position to say that the necessary houses will be available as required during the progress of the scheme.

We realise that the Council have not yet solved the question of the provision of houses for all those applicants on the housing list, but it is true to say that more rapid progress is now being made to this end. It is anticipated that 142 houses will be completed in 1952. The Council are suggesting that the target of completed houses for 1953 should be 250 and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government suggest that the target for 1954 should be 15 per cent. higher than that of 1953, which would give a target of completed houses of approximately 290 for 1954. Bearing these figures in mind it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that a reasonable proportion of these houses should be set aside for re-housing families at

present living in unfit houses, particularly having regard to the fact that a proportion of these families are already applicants on the housing list.

It is therefore suggested an eight-years slum clearance plan should be agreed by the Council. The eight-year plan should be divided into four two-year periods. The numbers to be dealt with in each period should be so graduated as to secure an acceleration of the slum clearance programme as the housing programme expands. By this means it is felt that the normal urgent housing demands made on the Council will be eased by the time the biggest demand is made on the Council's housing by the effect of the slum clearance programme and the provision of the necessary houses for this purpose will not be so difficult to attain.

It is suggested that the numbers to be dealt with in each of the two-year periods should be as follows:—

1953-54—55 houses ; 1955-56—65 ; 1957-58—80 ; 1959-60—100.

The Council will realise that it has not been possible to make a detailed survey of all the houses in the town. Nevertheless the following statement* shows the houses which, in our opinion, ought to be dealt with in the programme under discussion. In addition to the houses shown it is inevitable that a number of additional ones will emerge, which will require treatment ; these will not, however, seriously affect the scheme.

In assessing the order of priority, regard has been had to the incidence of flooding which occurs in the Milton area. It should be clearly understood that the order of priority if accepted need not necessarily be rigidly adhered to, as indeed factors might well arise which would require an alteration in the order.

If the Council accept the scheme now proposed, with or without amendment, it should be clearly understood that the Council and the occupiers of houses within the programme cannot expect that any work other than the barest minimum will be carried out in the period prior to demolition and that the Department should not be expected to deal with any matters except works necessary to keep the premises weatherproof and sanitary appliances working.

It is realised that a number of families who will be displaced as the scheme progresses will either be unable or unwilling to pay the rents demanded for new council houses—this applies particularly to old people ; and that a further number should not, because of their personal way of life, be given new council houses, until after a probationary period in other accommodation. To meet this problem it is suggested that the Council might consider the purchase of good class “working class” property. If care is exercised in the purchase of suitable property it might be possible to re-house a number of the sitting tenants in new council houses, thus making available the old house at a reasonable rental for families unable to pay the higher rents of new council houses.

Alongside the problem of the demolition of obviously unfit houses which cannot be rendered fit at an economic cost, there is the problem of the deterioration of many houses due to factors which are well known. It would appear that alongside any slum clearance programme there must be a drive to ensure that houses are maintained at a high level so as to

prevent further deterioration to such an extent as to render demolition the only economic solution.

The main way to secure this improvement in the condition of existing houses is by the operation of Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936. In order that a notice can be served upon the Owner of a dwelling house under the particular Section, it is necessary that the Council reach the opinion that the necessary works can be carried out at a reasonable cost having regard to the value of the house after completion of the works. Difficulty might be experienced in this connection as no guide is laid down as to what is reasonable cost. Further, in the event of default by the Owner (and in the present circumstances this is very likely) the Council are required to carry out the work in default. The cost in so doing can be recovered in various ways, but it is fair to say that in some cases, repayment will extend over a very long period of time.

We shall be obliged if the Council will give consideration to their policy in this matter and to give such guidance as they deem necessary so that the work of the Department can be carried on so as to secure a systematic approach to the problem of improving housing accommodation throughout the town.

[*Statement showing list of properties concerned omitted from this Appendix].